

EXPEDITED PROCEDURE – MAIL STOP AF
U.S. Serial No. 10/803,837
Attorney Docket No. KMC-617

REMARKS

RECEIVED
CENTRAL FAX CENTER
OCT 27 2006

The applicant has carefully considered the Office action dated August 31, 2006 and the references it cites. By way of this Response, claims 11 and 14 have been amended, claims 15-32 have been added, and claims 12 and 13 have been canceled without prejudice. Claims 11, and 14-32 are pending at issue, with claims 11, 21, and 27 being independent. As explained below, it is respectfully submitted that all pending claims are in condition for allowance and favorable reconsideration is respectfully requested.

In the specification, the paragraph [0016] has been amended to correct minor errors. No new matter has been added.

In the Office action dated August 31, 2006, claims 11-14 were rejected as unpatentable over Iwata et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,899,638). The applicant respectfully traverses each of the rejections.

The applicant respectfully submits that independent claims 11, 21, and 27 are patentable over the art cited in the Office action. In one example, independent claim 11 recites, *inter alia*, a transition region having a curved lateral surface extending from a first non-circular, elliptical outer edge to a second non-circular, elliptical outer edge. None of the cited references, whether taken alone or in combination, teach or suggest such a structure.

Briefly, as set forth in detail below, none of the cited references discloses or suggests a transition region having a curved lateral surface extending from a first non-circular, elliptical outer edge to a second non-circular, elliptical outer edge. Because none of the cited references makes such a disclosure, no combination of these references, even if there were motivation for such a combination, can result in the claimed apparatus of the pending claims.

Because Iwata et al. fails to disclose or suggest a transition region having a curved lateral surface extending from a first non-circular, elliptical outer edge to a second non-circular, elliptical outer edge, it follows that there is no combination of references to render

EXPEDITED PROCEDURE – MAIL STOP AF
U.S. Serial No. 10/803,837
Attorney Docket No. KMC-617

the pending claims obvious. Accordingly, the obviousness rejections based thereon should be withdrawn.

Independent claim 21 is also allowable. Claim 21 recites, *inter alia*, a transition region having a thickness decreasing in a non-linear manner from a first elliptical outer edge to a second elliptical outer edge. As explained above, Iwata et al. fails to teach or suggest such a structure. Accordingly, independent claim 5, and all claims dependent thereon, are allowable.

Independent claim 27 is also allowable. Claim 27 recites, *inter alia*, a transition region having a curved side extending from a first elliptical outer edge to a second elliptical outer edge. As explained above, Iwata et al. fails to teach or suggest such a structure. Accordingly, independent claim 27, and all claims dependent thereon, are allowable.

For at least the foregoing reasons, it is respectfully submitted that the pending claims are in condition for allowance. If, for any reason, the examiner is unable to allow the application in the next Office action, the examiner is encouraged to telephone the undersigned attorney at the telephone number listed below to discuss this matter.

The Commissioner is authorized to charge any fee deficiency required by this paper, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 11-0222.

Respectfully submitted,

KARSTEN MANUFACTURING CORPORATION
Legal Department
2201 W. Desert Cove Ave.
Phoenix, Arizona 85029
(602) 687-5415

October 27, 2006

/Frankie Ho/

Date

Frankie Ho
Reg. No. 48,479
Attorney for Applicant